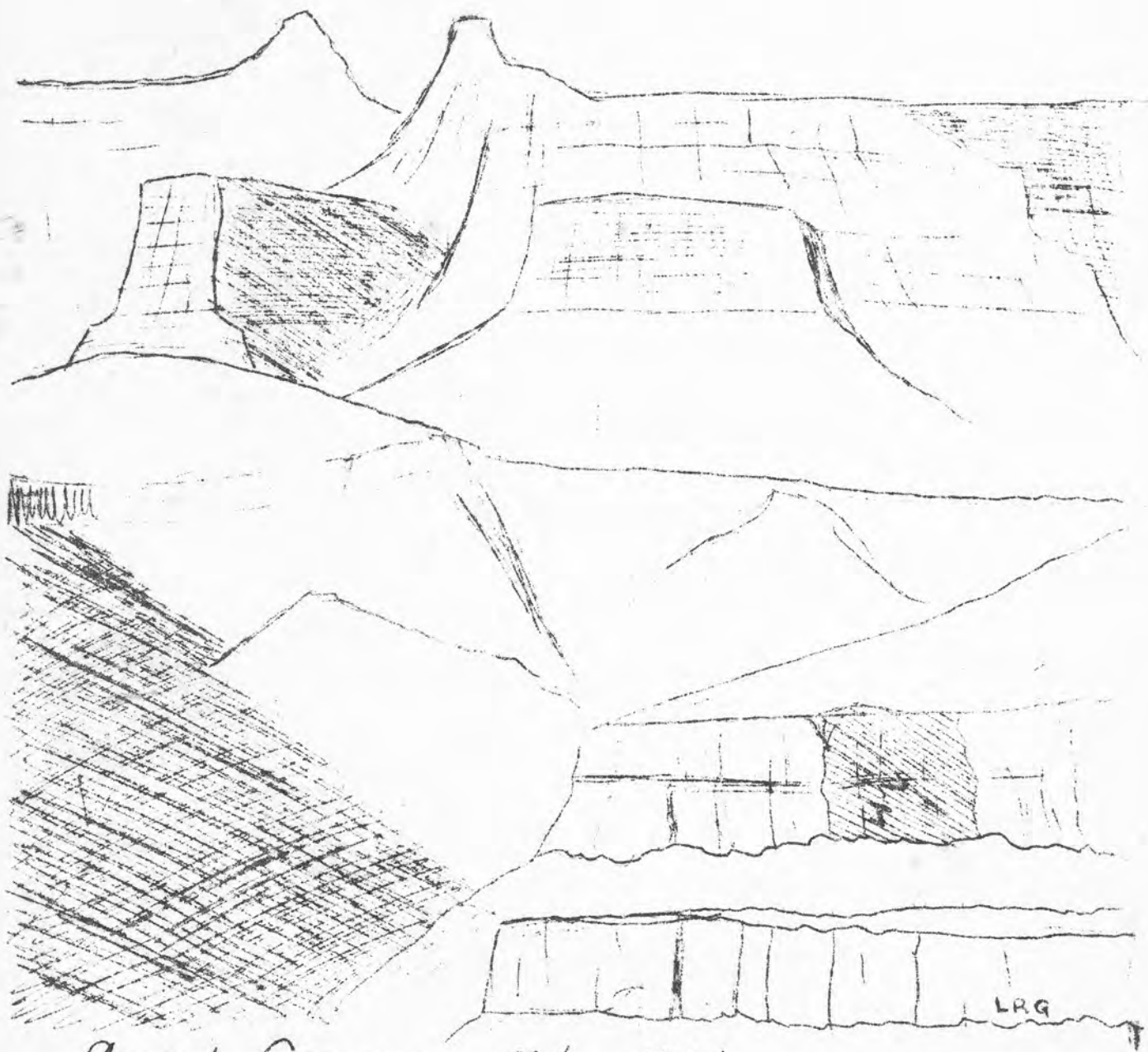


BEAR TRACK

of the U.C.H.C.

18 April

1961



Grand Canyon

Feb 1961

Grand Canyon 1961
by Tom Aley

Seven UCHC members decided that the best way to spend the semester break was to take a short trip through some of the inner parts of the Grand Canyon. I think that all members of the trip will now agree that the Grand Canyon is one of the most beautiful wilderness type areas of the United States.

We entered the Canyon on the Kaibab trail, and camped the first night was made at Phantom Ranch, which is on the Bright Angel Creek at the bottom of the Canyon. The next day we left the trail and traveled an interesting cross country route until we were near the junction of Phantom and Haunted Creeks. We followed Phantom Creek all day, and were delighted to find that the route was at all times interesting, and at some times sporting.

The following day was designed to be a layover. We took an easy trip to the head of Phantom Creek. Numerous fossils were found, and in some places a little ice on the quiet pools in the stream. For quite a distance the canyon ran very near the bottom of the Redwall limestone and thus presented us with new surprises at its every turn. Progress was finally stopped by a high cliff in the Redwall. We then leisurely returned to the same camp we had occupied on the second night and rubbed our feet. People can ask Tom Juster where to buy \$3 boots.

The next day we went cross country over the flat Tonto plateau. The route was rather rugged in places, but in general was rather enjoyable. The largest part of our group made it to our food cache along the Kaibab trail and camped that night in Cremation Canyon. This day's trip had been an indication of things to come, for it had been rather tiring.

The fifth day we left Cremation Canyon and went to Lone Tree Canyon to visit some Indian ruins of which I had heard. It was about 1 pm by the time we finally left the pleasant area to continue the day's travel. Keith Howard, who had spent the previous night at Phantom Ranch, caught up with us at about this time.

From Lone Tree Canyon we crossed Boulder Canyon and then started to head Grapevine Canyon. Progress here was slowed somewhat due to the temporary loss of one of our members. I think that in the future Mike Haseltine will not get quite so far ahead of the group which, as he found out, can change its route of travel. Eventually our little clan was re-united, and a beautiful sunset was seen just as we crossed the stream in Grapevine Canyon. By now it was apparent that we would not reach Cottonwood Canyon, our next campsite, in the daylight. Therefore, we cooked dinner at Grapevine Canyon and rested there for awhile.

When the moon was finally high enough (about 9 pm) we once again started traveling. Night travel with a full moon is a wonderful experience. The echoes and the shadows of that night will long be remembered by those who were on the trip. It is unfortunate, however, that most of the people were rather tired. It was midnight by the time we finally reached Cottonwood Canyon and made camp.

The next day we visited Cave of the Domes and then packed out of the Canyon along the now unmaintained Grandview Trail. We had snow most of the way up from the top of the Redwall, but in general it offered few problems.

The Grand Canyon offers fine opportunities for people to see natural grandeur. South Rim can be visited at any time of year, and winter trips are practical. Summer trips are hot but with good planning can be enjoyable. I would strongly advise the wilderness lover to consider the Grand Canyon for his trip.

The Sutter Buttes
by Peter Barna

Camping on the Sacramento River isn't so easy as you'd think. You have to find a levee road to drive on and look out for a place which is 1) solid (it matters!) 2) not ruddy 3) not sloping and 4) not too close to the river (you don't want to roll in!). Once you've found the spot you're in orbit--provided you don't mind grass thick with dew--it can be counfoundedly wet.

We found such a place near Colusa. Helen McGinnis (the leader) and Pris Dahlgren slept in the grass. Peter Barna (your fearless scribe) slept in the car (didn't want to be in orbit).

The next day we scaled the Sutter Buttes. The ascent is easy on the grassy slopes and can be done in one hour. It is windy all the way up, but you get the real great gusts of wind on the top. However, the vista is spectacular. The Buttes is a solitary island of hills and rocks in the Sacramento Valley and you can see tremendously far. The horizon is ringed by Mt. Diablo to the south, Mt. St. Helena to the southwest, the Coast range to the West, and Mt. Lassen and Mt. Shasta (!) to the north. The Sacramento River is winding through the Valley under your eyes. We had a clear day and there was no haze (so common in the Valley) what so ever.

After lunch we came down through the best grazing land in the country (the farmers who own the Sutter Buttes have a great number of sheep on the slopes) and went to see a bird refuge nearby. Parts of the area are flooded by the Water Management people and one of the swamps and reedlands thus created serves as a refuge for migratory ducks and whatnots who fly here for the winter from up North. Helen said that due to the hunting (the season just ended) these birds have completely changed their habits: they collect food during the night and sleep at daytime. This seemed to be so, for there wasn't much stirring in the afternoon.

We spent the following night at Clear Lake State Park (We could not duck the \$1 entrance fee although Peter suggested we drive in reverse so it would look as though we were coming out. There we had a nice campfire with lots of nice, tall tails. On Sunday we drove home through Mt. St. Helena and Vallejo (no way of avoiding that).

For the future, I think that one day will be enough for the Sutter Buttes if we start at 8 o'clock. It is easy hiking and the farmland area is a pleasant diversity from the bear-filled jungles of the Santa Lucias. I recommend it warmly as a warming up trip for beginners.

INVITATION TO MEETINGS OF UCHC'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
by John Faust, Pres. UCHC

The UCHC By-laws say that all Executive Committee meetings are open to the general membership. In the past few semesters very few of you members have taken advantage of your privilege to attend. Of course, there have been a few notable exceptions where the occasion has excited violent differences of opinion, and where special interests were at stake, but by and large, people stay away in trite droves. The club is yours. Executive Committee is elected by you. It's supposed to be a representative body. In practice, this doesn't wrk out very well because of a number of reasons, two of which are:

As usually happens, Ex Com isn't very representative-- eight of its nine members are among the better folk dancers, and the ninth is an avid hanger-on-- over half of ExCom are graduate students.

Ex Com members usually vote according to their own prejudices or principles entirely, because they don't have any immediate access to membership opinion when an issue comes up.

You as a member can't do much about the first of those, because you vote for the best nine people, regardless of their representation, but you can and should do something about the second.

What I am trying to say is, of course, that your representatives can't represent you unless they know what you think on the issues involved, they can't know what you think unless you express an opinion, and you can't do that unless you are there to express it.

Meeting notices are posted on the left side of the major bulletin board a couple of days before the meeting. They are usually held during the noon hour out on the lawn at the women's athletic field when it is nice out; otherwise in Room C. We'll see you there!

A POINT REYES NATIONAL PARK-- NOW OR NEVER
by Bill Eng's

Have you been on a beach "bike" at Point Reyes? If you have you will always remember the waves, the sand and the rugged plant life of this wilderness. But if developers are successful in subdividing the land on the peninsula, such trips will cease. If a national park can be established at Point Reyes, we the public can continue to enjoy the area. But if action is not taken NOW...

What can be done? Inform yourself. Talk with others about it. If you can, write to Mr. Udall, Secretary of the Interior, and to your congressmen urging support of the Point Reyes bills and emphasizing the importance of immediate action. Otherwise it may be too late.

Ventana Wild Area Backpacking
by Bill Gardiner

UHC spirit will have a chance to display its versatility on the weekend backpacking trip to the Ventana Wild Area in the Los Padres National Forest on April 29-30th. This unspoiled area lies immediately south of Carmel Valley.

Imagine yourself beside a cozy campfire with eager flames hungrily licking at the firelogs, brightly illuminating the surrounding pines, and toasting the faces of you and your congenial companions. The full moon rises slowly above the ridge to the East. A few of the more vigorous will soon be leaving on a moonlight hike along the ridge top. The stars are a blanket of jewels in the sky above and the night air is pleasantly warm. By the time you return, you should have mastered the names of a few of the major constellations and stars, Orion, Sirius, Betelgeuse, Venus, and Mars. Soon you will be sending your voice tolling through the pines in a campfire folksong. Later as a tired hiker strolls slowly off to the sleeping bags, a conscientious camper will extinguish the fire.

One of the most outstanding features of the trip is the abundant bird population. The ridge top is like a tooning sanctuary; wildlife scatters before you; and if you stop to enjoy the solitude that awaits you, the wildlife returns unafraid. Bear rumbles invigorate your imagination and pique your curiosity.

This is an easy beginning backpacking trip, but also stimulating to those more experienced hikers who may extend themselves on several sidetrips. Friday night the group will leave Berkeley between 6:00 and 6:30, arriving at Los Padres Dam three hours later. We'll pack up and begin an hour's moonlight hike to Rattlesnake Creek. Here after a cup of hot cocoa or coffee to relax tired bodies, a bed under the stars awaits you.

The next morning after a late breakfast, we'll hike up Rattlesnake Creek beneath the leafing Western Sycamore trees, and among the blooming wildflowers. We'll follow the trail up Danish Fork, make a short climb to the ridge, and follow the ridge top to Big Pines, and thence to our camp at Pat Springs. Total distance is five miles.

Pat Springs Camp is ideally located on a gentle dry north slope, with the spring nearby, and a clear view to the ocean, and across Wainwright Canyon to Ventana Cone and the connecting ridge. We'll break camp about noon Sunday and arrive in Berkeley between 8:00 and 8:30, stopping for lunch along the road.

A slip on a stair has landed Kay Hershey, stalwart UHC member, in the hospital with a broken vertebra. She is now reposing in room 349 Herrick Hospital and can be viewed daily from 2-4 PM and from 6:30 to 8:00 PM.

Room C Eshleman hardly seems the same any more without the trusty telephone. It is now impossible to call on an outside line unless the club pays extra for phone service. Meanwhile, people, place your calls from the phone booth down the hall.

Mel Bernstein, chairman of the nominations committee, is interested in getting the names of people willing and able to run for the Hiking Club Ex Com next semester. Any such people should contact him or leave him a note on the bulletin board in room C.

Yosemite Valleying
by Bill Gardiner

On Easter-break eve sixty enthusiastic UCHC'ers descended upon Camp 4 at Yosemite Valley anticipating a weekend of dry rocks and sunny trails. The snowfall that night presaged an unusual day ahead. The next morning we awoke to see clouds hugging and swirling about the cliffs. Avid photographers like Phil Pennington raced about the Valley as if in a trance overawed at the fleeting and capricious clouds.

By nine o'clock Camp 4 was a bustle of activity, fire, smoke, food, and hikers. A lively snowball fray delighted a few participants and incurred the wrath of the usual stoical clique. Since the rocks were wet with melting snow, the would-be climbers turned to hiking and the whole band of UCHC'ers ascended the Yosemite Falls Trail. Disparities in physical conditioning soon became apparent. Some hikers returning from Yosemite Point, where they had enjoyed lunch, came upon their slower comrades still plodding the upward trail. These flying bodies dug up so much snow that the snow kept falling for several hours afterwards, blotting out the daylight.

That evening most of the members deserted Camp 4 after an open campfire folksing beneath Giant Boulder. Meanwhile in Yosemite Lodge, a few members helped the "I" house gain a little vigor and volume in their folksinging. Several songs later, in "What Will We Do With the Drunken Sailor," Mle Bernstein set the tempo "Way, Way, UP she rises." The UCHC'ers dominated the singing thereafter, and a tired "I" House left shortly, but the folksinging continued in a bold and undiminished spirit.

The return to camp was not without surprises. A nocturnal visitor had investigated the contents of a few packages to the dismay of their owners. That night the club slept in varying degrees of comfort and warmth.

Dawn broke with the snow falling gently upon the earth. The club proved its varying interests that day. One "large" group went car touring to Badger Pass and the museum, while another "small" group went climbing (Phil Scott in particular). And a few hardy hikers sloshed through the snow toward Mirror Lake, pausing now and then for spirited snow skirmishes. Lunchtime found them tarrying in Indian Cave. At Mirror Lake a boasting Mel failed to impress the group by walking across the lake as he avowed he'd done before. When was it Mel? A short distance up Tenaya Canyon, the hike's crest appeared where the octet put whiskers on a snowman and engaged in a glorious snow battle. The return to Camp 4 along the highway included such highlights as a Scottish air by an inspired Mel Bernstein, an improvised marching band, and impulsive stare-em-down antics.

A wet and perhaps cold but joyous band descended upon the fireplace at Yosemite lodge to soak up the fire's rays that afternoon. Following the news of more stormy weather to come, several carloads left for other destinations. Yosemite Valley was beautiful in its mantle of white.

Yosemite Valley, Easter Week
by Julie Verran

Hikers struggled on through the snow, sleet, and hail, but most climbers retired to Yosemite Lodge to prop their feet up in front of the fire, glare wanly at the skiers, and provide a topic of conversation for the weatherbound tourists. The bad weather went on through Monday and many people left. The survivors kept dry at night in various hidaways scattered throughout the Valley.

Tuesday was clear and windy. The irregularities of the north faces were etched with snow, and waterfalls streamed down the cliffs. Yard-square sheets of ice came off El Cap Falls, were blown out several hundred feet from the face and were carried in great circles by updrafts for several minutes before they fell, with chips of ice flying from their edges. I was belaying on the Footstool when a chunk of ice from the rim hit me on the head. I was sure I had an impressive wound, but the boys at Camp 4 just laughed.

Many climbers had trouble with wet rock, ice-filled cracks, and high winds. Later in the week three climbers went up to climb the Lost Arrow Tip and ran into snow-covered verglas on the way down to rappel into the notch. They were chopping steps with their piton hammers, and after one of them slipped and had to save himself with a piton hammer self arrest, they retreated.

Two people came from Colorado who had never climbed in the Valley. One of them decided to stay. The other, Pete Lev, was much impressed and said he'd learned something new every day he climbed and that he intends to start people back there using good hardware scientifically. He says that rock climbs in Colorado have been graded on danger rather than on difficulty, because of poor hardware, the use of which has been encouraged by equipment stores, to the detriment of the climbing standard.

There were a couple of good folk sings, several climbers were asked to leave the coffee shop, and people kept arriving and leaving all week. The weather stayed clear and the temperature reached a high of 80 on Easter Sunday.

THE BEAR TRACK is the official publication of the University of California Hiking Club.

The editor is Tom Juster.

Typists are Kathy Connell and Kathy Holden

The Miniographer is Mike Haseltine